

MACAULAY'S USE OF AUTHORITIES

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tional letters of Avaux were copied, for Macaulay's use, from the originals in the French Foreign Office, and he had also the letters of a certain Desgrigny who was employed in the commissariat,¹ though he missed those of Lauzun.

Of as great, if not of greater, value were the Dutch despatches. During the reign of James II events in England were of such importance to Dutch statesmen that accurate information on the subject was absolutely essential to them. They therefore sent their best diplomatists to England, not merely to negotiate but to observe and report. Macaulay, after referring to the despatches of Van Citters (the ambassador in England at the time of Charles II's death), adds the following note :

As this is the first occasion on which I cite the correspondence of the Dutch ministers at the English court, I ought here to mention that a series of their despatches, from the accession of James the Second to his flight, forms one of the most valuable parts of the Mackintosh collection.

The subsequent despatches, down to the settlement of the government in February 1689,¹ procured from the Hague. The Dutch archives have been far too little explored.

They abound with information interesting in the highest degree to every Englishman. They are admirably arranged ; and they are in the charge of gentlemen whose

courtesy, liberality, and zeal for the interests
of literature,
cannot be too highly praised.²

In the period subsequent to 1693,
Macaulay used,
besides Dutch diplomatic correspondence, the
letters of a
French refugee, living in London, named
L'Hermitage,
who was employed by the Dutch government
to supply it
with intelligence of English affairs.

>IV, 1834 (xv).

= 1, 434 (iv).